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# PREFACE

During 1934 as leader of the Field Museum Anthropological Expedition to the Near East, in addition to about 10,000 herbarium specimens from Trans-Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Iran, I collected a number of useful plants and drugs in Iran and Iraq.

The late Dr. Berthold Laufer, then Curator of Anthropology, had requested me to make this collection and to obtain such information as could be had regarding their use in the treatment of diseases and in prescriptions for various ailments.

In Iran specimens were purchased in the native markets of Tehran and Isfahan. In each case the Persian name with its English transliteration and the use of the drug or herb was recorded. While guests of Dr. Erich Schmidt at Rayy during September, 1934, we obtained specimens in Tehran. Dr. Walter P. Kennedy of the Royal College of Medicine in Baghdad and Mr. George Miles, member of the archaeological expedition staff at Rayy, assisted in this work.

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At Isfahan Mirza Muhammad Ali Khan, ninety-five-year-old doctor, very kindly consented to dictate his prescriptions (pp. 200–216) for various ailments. He began to practice medicine at the age of twenty after spending about five years in a local school. His father, several uncles, and his grandfather were medical practitioners using the oral tradition and two large handwritten volumes of prescriptions, which I examined at his home in the depths of the labyrinthine Ghetto. At Isfahan the dictation in Persian was recorded by Juda Rabbi Hedvat of the Alliance Israélite.

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The translation was prepared in part by Dr. A. H. Mookree and by Dr. A. H. K. Sassani, Iran Government scholar at the University of Chicago. Dr. H. W. Bailey of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London, revised the Persian characters and the transliterations.

The assistance of Mr. Paul C. Standley, Associate Curator of Botany in Field Museum, who checked the botanical names in the text, and of Miss Elizabeth Reniff in the preparation of the report is gratefully acknowledged.

Mr. A. R. Horwood of Kew Herbarium very kindly identified some of the specimens.

The spelling of place names conforms to the system adopted by the British Permanent Committee on Geographical Names, published in London by the Royal Geographical Society.